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From the Reference Desk

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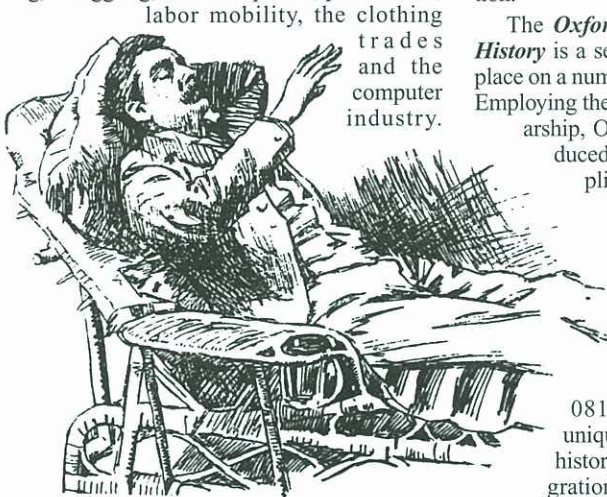
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From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, Robert Scott Small Library, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424; Phone: 843-953-8014; Fax: 843-953-8019) <gilson@cofc.edu>

Under the able direction of editor-in-chief **Joel Mokyr**, **Oxford University Press** has produced another valuable set that should have particular appeal to academic libraries. Firmly based on recent scholarship, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History* (2003, 0195170946, \$695) reflects the interplay between economic practices and society throughout world history. While the arrangement of articles is alphabetical, conceptually the encyclopedia is organized into broad categories. Articles fit within topics like geography (by countries, regions and cities), as well as demography, agriculture, labor, and natural resources. In addition, other broad categories include money, banking and finance; production systems, business history and technology; and macroeconomics and international economics. There are also over 125 individual and family biographies ranging from bankers to inventors and labor leaders to entrepreneurs. Nearly 900 separate articles, and sub articles, make up the set's five volumes and fill out the broad categories mentioned above. They cover topics as diverse as crop rotation, black markets, free trade, public housing, smuggling, financial panics, pest control,



labor mobility, the clothing trades and the computer industry.

The articles are accessible and not overly technical. Nonetheless they are intended for a scholarly audience. Each is well researched and has a selected bibliography containing primary sources and important works. The editors have also provided a 16-page listing of relevant Internet sites current as of Spring 2003, "See also" references link related articles and there is a thorough index to the entire set in the last volume. Importantly, for an encyclopedia covering such an interdisciplinary subject, there is a "Topical Outline of Articles" giving the reader a useful overview of the range and relationship of the topics covered.

Although the contents could still be seen as "western-centric," authors were asked to include non-western economics whenever relevant, and two members of the editorial board are specialists in non-western economies. This concern is most obvious in the individual articles on the specific geographic entities ranging from Hong Kong to Pakistan and ancient Japan to the Ottoman Empire, but it is also interwoven in articles covering broader topics like the agricultural revolution, money and coinage and urbanization.

The *Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History* is a set that will take a well-deserved place on a number of academic library shelves. Employing their usual high standards of scholarship, Oxford University Press has produced a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to the history of the "dismal science" not available elsewhere. Most academic libraries should give it strong consideration.

The *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance* (2003, 0816045399, \$65) centers on a unique chapter in African American history. Resulting from the Great Migration of black Americans from the

rural South to Northern and Midwestern cities, a cultural consciousness and artistic outpouring found its focus in Harlem during the 1920's and 1930's. This one volume encyclopedia informs this development with articles on key movements like Black Nationalism and the Pan-African Congress, important organizations like the **National Urban League** and the **NAACP** and influential publications like the *Amsterdam News* and *Crisis*. There are also articles on major art forms like jazz and folk art, events like the Harlem Riots and the Scottsboro trial and specific issues like interracial interaction and the Jim Crow laws. Another major feature of this book is the coverage of the artists, musicians, writers, and thinkers who fueled the Harlem Renaissance. Numerous individual biographies, as well as articles on specific works run throughout this work. The arrangement of articles is alphabetical and there is a general index as well as a list of entries by topic. There are also a number of useful appendices including a glossary of Harlem Renaissance slang, a chronology, a map section, and a list of further readings, above and beyond the brief bibliographies at the end of each entry.

The more one examines the *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance*, the more one is impressed. It is a fascinating and carefully considered work on a pivotal time in African American history. This book will be useful for high school students and undergraduates, as well as the general reader, and should find a home in all types of libraries. Depending on need, it is appropriate for reference or circulation. (A paperback edition is available from Checkmark Books, 0816045402, \$21.95.)

Sage Reference has also released a one-volume encyclopedia that will find an avid audience in a variety of libraries. *The Encyclopedia of Murder and Violent Crime* (2003, 076192437X, \$125), edited by **Dr. Eric Hickey**, contains more than 200 articles that range from those on theories of aggression, to ones centered on organized crime to others dealing with various forms of violent behavior. Written by more than 100 qualified scholars and practitioners, these articles are serious and informed, being both descriptive and fact filled. Aside from the broad topics mentioned above, other articles in the encyclopedia center on criminal investigation techniques and forensic science, family violence, juvenile crime and gangs, homicide, serial and mass murder, terrorism, psychological theories, and victimology. Also given space in this book are specific crimes like the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, atrocities like the ethnic cleansing in Serbia, and infamous offenders like the Boston Strangler, Albert DeSalvo. Access to the information in the encyclopedia is provided by a solid general index, an alphabetical list of entries and a "Reader's Guide" of entries classified by related topics. Additional


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Adventures in Librarianship from page 60

expanded in the 12th edition. Kudos to our illustrator, Andrew Grabson, for creating miniature woodblock renditions of such difficult subjects as "parsimony," "atmosphere," and "skulk."

Because of the recent departure of our Etymologist, Dr. Howard Kanker, the dates of first usage, bracketed at the end of each definition, are "guesstimates" based on editorial fancy and back-room dice tossing. Though the dates should not be cited as fully "accurate," we believe they will be of interest to scholars, numerologists, and doctoral candidates in the field of chaos theory.

Close readers will notice that this edition has dropped the words "catena," "kittle," and "supinate." A poll of our office staff revealed that not one of us had ever used those words. Subsequently, our editors decided that they were just "clogging up the works." We suggest that our readers, should they come across those words in conversation or in text, simply frown and look the other way.

Finally, we have added to our back matter with the 12th edition. Along with the standard sections for biographical entries, geographical names, and casino addresses, we have added sections for cable channel conversion and Serbian slang. We believe that these, along with all the changes in *Dumster's* 12th, will serve our reader well and continue our 50-year tradition of excellence. 

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features include a glossary and a list of criminological theorists, and the basic tenets of their theories. There are also lists of well-known serial killers and organized crime figures, both domestic and international. However, there is one negative. The bibliographies are somewhat uneven. Some articles, like the one on mass murder, list 17 sources, while others, like the one on hate crimes, list no further readings.

As a good encyclopedia does, the *Encyclopedia of Murder and Violent Crime* brings together articles that offer diverse insights into the topic, while at the same time giving the reader a feel for its overall scope. It should serve to complement broader, more comprehensive, multi-volume encyclopedias like *Sage's Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment* (2002, 076192258X, \$625) and *Brunner-Routledge's Encyclopedia of Criminology and Deviant Behavior* (2001, 1560327723, \$520). Recommended, particularly for academic libraries, but given the popular interest in the topic, public libraries will also want to consider it.

Another single volume reference that will compliment larger sets is the *Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance* (2003, 0198601751, \$150). Starting with the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 and ending with the Thirty years War in 1618, this book offers over 3,000 brief, but authoritative, articles on one of the most vibrant and cre-

ative eras of European history. Scholarly in every sense of the word, this dictionary defines and explains terms relating to every major theme running through Renaissance history and culture. Art and architecture along with trades and crafts, philosophical and theological thought, war and politics, language and literature, economics and finance, music and theater, as well as religion and science are all given ample attention. And, of course, the dictionary is full of biographical sketches of both major and minor figures that influenced the Renaissance. A thorough and comprehensive thematic index couples with an alphabetical arrangement to provide access to articles. Readers will find this reference to be useful for both the quick fact, as well as reliable background information, especially in the larger survey articles.

Intended for use by student, scholar and informed lay reader, the *Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance* will satisfy each audience. Some may find it a bit pricey, but given the production values and the amount of information provided, it is a reasonable expenditure. It should find a place next to *Scribner's* award winning *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (1999, 0-684-80514-6, \$750).

Routledge has filled a vacuum with its *Encyclopedia of World Environmental History* (2003, 0415937329, \$345). Once thought immutable, we have come to realize that the earth is always undergoing dynamic change. Not only do these three volumes discuss how natural phenomena contribute to these changes, more im-

portantly, they show how "human action has increasingly affected the natural world and its evolution."

A total of 520 alphabetically arranged entries discuss impacts ranging from those of agribusiness to those of space exploration, and from activities as diverse as urbanization and various religious beliefs. There are also articles that document the changes caused to the world's environment by natural causes ranging from avalanches to extreme weather events. Other articles point to the resulting changes in specific places from Antarctica to the Mediterranean Basin to the Yellow Sea. In addition, there are articles that cover key ecological concepts, laws and regulations and people and events. Sidebars, maps and photos serve to highlight and complement the text while the writing is authoritative, without being overly technical. Each entry also has a useful bibliography of scholarly readings. However, one criticism here is the lack of a thematic index grouping related topics. Admittedly, "see also" references link related articles, but they do not replace the sense of scope offered by a thematic index. Such an index is particularly helpful in giving added definition to a field that has so recently been recognized as a separate area of study.

While intended for an academic audience, the *Encyclopedia of World Environmental History* will have broader appeal. It deals with a topic that is of concern to all of us. Recommended for academic and larger public libraries.

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Bernan Press has carved out a publishing niche by cleverly repackaging government statistics. Fortunately, by adding valuable editorial touches, they have also developed a list of useful reference titles. *The Who, What, and Where of America: Understanding the Census Results* (2003, 0890597634, \$95) is a recent example. Edited by former Director of the US Census Bureau, **Martha Farnsworth Riche** and **Deirdre A. Gaquin**, this book serves to complement another Bernan publication, the annual *County and City Extra*. (2002, 0890595976, \$120). The *County and City Extra* "provides up-to-date statistical information for every state, county, metropolitan area, congressional district, and all US cities with a population of 25,000 or more as of the year 2000." In order to supplement this information, the *Who, What, and Where of America* takes data

from the census long form, filled out by a sample population, and presents it in three parts. The first part covers information on "age, race, Hispanic origin, household structure, ancestry, and the languages spoken at home." Part 2 offers statistics on "education, labor force, status, work and family patterns, income and poverty," while part 3 provides figures on migration patterns, housing, and transportation to work." Each part is introduced by a section of colored maps, along with an explanation of the data that follows. Other useful features include a section of rankings on a number of "key demographic and housing characteristics," as well as five appendices. These appendices help clarify geographic concepts and codes, define metropolitan statistical areas and components, provide state maps locating metropolitan areas, counties and central cities and lists cities by state and county.

All of these features provide added value to the data in the tables. In particular, the editors' analysis of trends like our aging population, and its increasing diversity and changing distribution, is of value in understanding

what all of the numbers are saying. However, there is one suggested improvement. For the vast majority of tables, a citation for the source is not listed within immediate view. There is a listing of sources and definitions "hidden" in appendix F, but that takes a while to locate and, in any case, does not provide much assistance in locating the tables on the Census Website. (Actually, that is an idea for another publication, a guide for using the Census Website.)

In any case, this minor concern is outweighed by the actual data being presented in a useful and handy single volume. In short, *The Who, What, and Where of America* provides the researcher with a wealth of information in an accessible format. Of course, making full use of this book requires spending a little time reading through the explanations and "getting the lay of the land." But, it is well worth the effort. Academic libraries and larger public libraries where statistical research is common will want to consider this title. 🐼

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Column Editor's Note: December and January are saturated with holidays and festivals; Hanukkah, Christmas, Ramadan, and Kwanza are among the more universally observed. This year, why not celebrate lesser-known holidays such as the Rice Cake Festival, or *Mochi No Matsuri*. This Japanese tradition takes place on the eighth day of the twelfth moon, and participants offer special rice cakes in prayer. While you are at it, mark Sylvester Day on your calendar as well. On this day, December 31, Pope Sylvester is heartily honored. Another exciting celebration is Vasant Panchami. Kept on the fifth day of the waxing half of the month of Mahaga, Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of learning, is honored with—none other than—books.

Whatever your flavor of festivities, this time of year provides us the opportunity to relax and catch up. Reviewers **Steven Profit** and **Ellen Finnie Duranceau** suggest a variety of books for your reading pleasure, as reading is undoubtedly a popular leisure activity among ATG family. Happy reading, everyone, and happy holidays to you and yours. — DV

Dover, Edwin. *The Disputed Presidential Election of 2000: A History and Reference Guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003. 0313323194. 166 pages. \$44.95.

Reviewed by **Steven Profit** (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <profits@cofc.edu>

In the preface of his book, **Edwin Dover** writes that his "... primary goal is to provide solid background information about the personalities, politics, laws, events, and meaning of the disputed presidential election of 2000." To that, this reviewer responds, "Mission accomplished!" *The Disputed Presidential Election of 2000* is a focused and robust history of that controversial balloting.

The book's introductory material works well as ready-reference information. There are one-sentence biographical sketches of 20 key figures in the campaign and post-election events and a 122-entry chronology that covers the entire campaign season from results of a May 11, 1998, Gallup poll to December 13, 2000, when Gore conceded the elec-



tion after the Supreme Court's ruling that ended the legal battles over the Florida vote recounting process.

The six chapters present detailed histories of campaign, election, and post-election events as well as examinations of relevant background issues. Chapter one provides an overview of the election in a manner that elaborates on certain events and processes noted in the chronology. Dover focuses on the party primaries both in general and regarding the 2000 contests in particular; the general election campaign including the four debates involving the presidential and vice-presidential candidates; election day including demographic and geographic breakdowns for the vote tally; and a brief overview of the situation in Florida before, during, and after election day.

Chapter two concerns the electoral college. Dover explores its creation, its history, and how changes in the law and the political environment in the United States over time have affected its role in the national electoral process. He presents the popular arguments for and against the continued use of the electoral college. The author is of the opinion that the status quo will likely hold for the foreseeable future due to a lack of consensus on the need for reform.

The third chapter is a detailed narrative of the legal challenges and the counterchallenges of the post-election struggles over the vote tallying process in Florida. Dover examines the avenues of redress open to the Gore side and explains why the Democrats chose the goals and strategies they did. The Bush response is given similar analysis. The decisions and reactions of various other actors—county election officers, state government officials, judges in the state and federal courts—at turns furthered and frustrated the intentions of both the Bush and Gore camps. The text gives a play-by-play account of the series of court battles in the context of this greater environment where other parties exercised their duties and their influence. Definitions and illustrations of butterfly ballots and hanging, dimpled, and pregnant chads are provided, and the disputes surrounding the use of such ballots and the counting of chads are well explained. Dover handles this complex interplay of thrusts, parries,

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